

LESSON 11

Tame the Pain

Now that you've learned ways to manage your thoughts, it's time to gain control of your emotions. You took the first step in the last lesson. Thoughts produce emotions.

Most people are surprised when they learn they can change emotions. Sometimes it seems emotions "just appear." They are actually triggered. You have the power and ability to tame those painful emotions. The skills you learned in the last lesson have prepared you for this lesson.

FEELINGS ARE IMPORTANT

Before you learn how to change feelings, it's crucial to know that feelings aren't bad. **Feelings are a natural human response to what happens in life.** They are a signal of what brings joy and where you are hurting.

For example, if you're with friends and someone

brings up getting married, you could recall fondly your own marriage, or you could feel sadness because you're not married and would like to be.

What may be happy to one person may remind you of someone or something painful. Knowing how to work with your feelings when this happens is empowering.

These feelings aren't bad; they're painful.

THE ROLE OF GRIEF

Whenever you experience a loss, you move through the stages of grief. The loss could range from scuffing your new shoes to the horror of betrayal. The stages of grief are the same for both but more intense for the more painful and life-changing event.

When you scuff your shoes, you'll go through the stages quickly and, probably, once. When you've been betrayed, you go back and forth through the various stages with changes in the type and intensity of feelings.

The more deeply you've been hurt, the longer it takes to navigate the stages of grief. Be patient with yourself as you use the tools below to navigate through the feelings.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR LONG-TERM HEALTH

When in the midst of the pain of grief, it's difficult to think about the consequences of your feelings on your physical, mental, and emotional health.

It's crucial for your long-term emotional and physical health to feel, work through, and release the feelings which come from grief. In cases of betrayal or the ending of a relationship, it takes time to navigate those feelings.

For your emotional, mental, and physical health, it's important to release the anger, anxiety, and despair which can accompany loss. The sooner you're able to do this, the more quickly you can move on to your new future.

ADAPTING WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED TO RELEASE DESTRUCTIVE FEELINGS

DISCOVER HOW TO ADAPT WHAT YOU LEARNED IN MANAGING YOUR THOUGHTS TO LEARNING HOW TO CHANGE YOUR FEELINGS:

1. **The Mirror.** In the early stages after someone has betrayed, abandoned, or otherwise hurt you, it's important to encourage and support yourself. **As you stand in front of the mirror looking yourself in the eye, say aloud to yourself:**
 - “Yes, this is terrible, but you will make it through this.”
 - “Yes, (whatever you need to say about the situation), but you will make it through this.”
 - **After about a month or so, change your messages to:**

- “It's over. Let it go and move on.”
- “They're not worth staying stuck. Let's get moving.”
- When you do this, you are telling your subconscious mind, “Yes, I recognize this is difficult, but I know I'll get better.”

2. **Put all your feelings in a letter.... Then burn it.**

- Use the same process you used in releasing thoughts. This time, focus on your feelings.
- When you're ready to burn the letter, say, **“I release this relationship, this situation, and all my associated feelings. I’m beginning a new life!”**
- Remember to write long-hand and not with a computer. This method is an excellent way to get those feelings out.

3. **Change your feelings.** It doesn't matter where your feelings come from, you can change them. Learning to change your feelings requires some advanced preparation.

- Recall at least three wonderful memories.
- Write each one out in detail using all five senses. Get in touch with the feelings you had at that event.
- When you catch yourself feeling miserable, tell yourself, "Nope, I'm not going to waste this time on feelings that make me miserable."
- Immediately recall one of those three happy memories. Immerse yourself in that memory until the other feeling is gone.
- Because of the way the brain works, focusing on the happy and wonderful feeling cancels out the unhappy one. **The more you do this the more your brain is trained to focus on the positive.**

SUMMARY

As you learned how to change your feelings, you noticed that the exercises were similar to the one of changing thoughts. **Thoughts produce feelings.**

In the next lesson, you'll learn how to change your behavior so you can release the past and move to the future.

Before you go to the next lesson, please take time now to do the following exercise to anchor in what you've learned.

REFLECTION

Take the time now to write out the wonderful memories you'll use to knock out the painful memories. Put in as much sensory detail as possible. Include:

- How it looked (colors, shapes)
 - How it sounded (voices, music, people's comments)
 - How it felt (your own feelings and how your body felt)
 - How it smelled
 - How it tasted (foods, drink, imagine tasting something there like a blade of grass)
1. Describe an event in which you were proud.

2. Describe an event in which you were excited.

3. Describe an event in which you were peaceful.